

EASTHAM HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2021

FINAL MINUTES

MEETING #3

ATTENDEES: Kate Berg (Chair); Felice Coral; Stella Edmondson, Beverly Hobbs, Hilda Merolli, Dilys Smith

A Zoom connection was established. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

Draft minutes from the last meeting of 10 November 2021 were reviewed and accepted. The efforts of Kyle Wibby were commended.

Kate reported that Gywnne Guzzeau had contacted her in response to prior emails, and stated that she was planning to submit an application for Helping Our Women before Thanksgiving. Of note, all participants in the HOW Grief Support Group are Eastham residents, with more expected to join.

Kate stated that committee documents will be accepted for shredding at Town Hall; but please remove staples and clips prior to shredding.

Mass Appeal (Rebecca Holmes)

Kate stated that the welcoming attitude toward all potential customers is critical to the organization's success.

Rebecca stated that the shop has been very busy, with lots of clothes, lots of clients. The Knights of Columbus delivered 130 winter coats, and more were also expected from Seamen's Bank. Activity during the first quarter of 2021 included 610 customers, with an additional 310 through the second quarter this year. More public relations, word of mouth has resulted in more customers. However, families with students in public schools may not be as aware of Mass Appeal and its offerings, and there clearly is a need since current supplies are already depleted. Of note, Eastham is second-largest community that is served by Mass Appeal.

There are new volunteers, of whom many are younger, plus seniors, all of whom report having positive experiences volunteering at Mass Appeal.

Summer 2021 was very busy, with the return of tourists. Many new customers were expecting to pay with credit cards, but only cash donations are accepted. Summer donations were often

larger than usual. More Orleans residents have visited Mass Appeal this year, so an application will be submitted to Orleans. This increase is thought to be possibly related to the closure of Katy's Korner.

Holiday season plans include: Secret Santa table, with toys, books, and puzzles, and possibly tricycles for young children. Toy donations are being requested and accepted for children from infancy through grade school age.

Have developed Facebook and website pages for announcements and information.

Mass Appeal has working relationships with HPC and LCOC, which have a remote site in the adjacent parking lot (in Wellfleet) for coordinated and convenient services. The B-bus has a stop at Dunkin Donuts in the same plaza.

'We are just like a retail store, but without cash registers!'

No household goods are accepted, only clothing, towels, linens, bedding, personal accessories. St. Joan of Arc takes household goods, as does AIM, as do swap shops at local dumps. Even when closed for Covid, Mass Appeal never stopped taking clothing, and volunteers monitored clothing bins and sorted clothing.

There was a volunteer appreciation lunch at Brickhouse, covered by Seamen's grant, last month, that was very much appreciated by all who attended.

Kate stated that she was glad that Eastham residents are using this service, and suggest that Mass appeal contact school nurses & counselors, to further identify needy families. Claudia Crozen, counselor at Wellfleet Elementary, was suggested as a contact there.

Dilys stated that Mass Appeal is a 'happy place to go' due to atmosphere created by volunteer staff.

Alzheimer's Support Group of Cape Cod: Melanie Braverman

Kate commented on the incidence of Alzheimers on the Cape, ever-growing. Eastham Public Library has also developed a resource library of books, videos, and games to assist families caring for Alzheimer patients. Melanie commented that the pandemic has been particularly devastating, with acceleration in symptoms, stress on caregivers, and closure of day programs, especially in Eastham.

Services slowly restarting, but clients are hesitant due to Covid risk, but need the services and support. The loss of health care services on the Cape has also presented challenges, and it is not yet clear what will be restored.

Robust Zoom activities were scheduled, with multiple groups and focused attention on those who need more assistance. Collaboration with NYU provided online experience prior to pandemic that allowed for a more smooth transition from live to Zoom activities. There is now a full-time tech resource for staff and clients. Cultural programs with CCMOA, hybrid with live programming, have attracted much interest.

Kate noted that caregiver support has resulted in less stress and better results in maximizing life of affected individuals. With younger individuals, and those with younger children, affinity groups can be established. Adult children (with families of their own) are now becoming caregivers.

AFSG received a Federal grant, for a potential model for community care as demonstrated on Cape Cod. The focus was define by services provided by and driven by the needs of the community. Grant team comprised of active caregivers, 'living it', and thus providing real-world experience and documentation of needs. The grant focuses on a particular program, with the goal of creating a national model. The federal grant coordinator lives in Eastham, and kindly notified Melanie about the grant application process. She visited the office, and observed scope of activity. The grant process caused the organization to review and document resources and activities to qualify for the grant.

What are plans for resuming public activities?? With increased vaccinations, more likely, but the Day Program in Eastham has been closed. The Town doesn't want to take it on at this time. Most programs have closed, some have re-opened at reduced levels. Melanie has spoken with Dorothy Burritt of the Eastham Senior Center. It is unclear at present whether support and caregiver groups can resume in-person meetings. There is also a shortage of respite workers.

Hilda suggested that contact be made with the non-English speaking community that may have people interested in caregiving. The immigrant cultures are often more supportive of elderly family members and try to keep them at home.. Preparation for this would include establishment of trust, ensuring proper documentation, language support/translation, etc., ideally with support from the neighborhood. Family and social support structures (e.g., churches) may be helpful in this effort.

Coverage for caregiver and clients in the event of medical crises/hospitalizations is critical. Caregivers may be unable to leave Alzheimer's client without care, and therefore may neglect their own health care needs.

Another goal is the creation of a program for early identification of cognitive issues in people who live alone, focused in Eastham – how to be the eyes and ears for these people, how to proceed with planning for care as cognitive function declines. Police/Fire staff may be aware of

these individuals, and what needs that can be addressed by Town personnel, given staffing constraints and police/fire priorities.

Current and future needs of elderly should be considered in Town planning, given the growing elderly population. The part-time residents organization may also contribute input.

Kate commented that this organization provides unique services that are not duplicated by any other agency, and are-critical for Eastham.

Planned Meetings

- **Wednesday 12/1 7PM on Zoom**

Family Pantry – Christine Menard

Food 4 Kids

- **Wednesday 12/8**

LCOC scheduled

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Felice Coral